

# Nation

**Matthew Coon-Come**  
**National Grand Chief**  
**Assembly of First Nations**



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# HOTELS, MOTELS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



It's been a busy time for me. First of all I went to the annual general meeting of the National Association of Friendship Centers in Vancouver. A great place, nice to visit and recommended for all. The meeting was great and at the same time the Aboriginal Youth Councils were meeting. All this meant there was a great many people who showed up. Since the Delta hotel chain in Vancouver was on strike it led to a few problems. Seems there's a staff to sleepover-client ratio that has to be respected since it was the law.

As a result I was standing in line waiting to check-in when I hear they're turning away people who had made reservations. I'm praying at this point to get in. No problems and it wasn't due to any of my sweet talking but good planning. The good planning of the Friendship Centers Executive Director Ida. She had secured my room before the cutoff point had been reached. I was safe. I watched as she charmed the staff and made sure that fresh towels and such were on hand. The only thing I had to do was make my own bed. No bad, not bad at all. It gave me yet more appreciation for her work to see she even took care of the small details.

Truly the least appreciated people, at times, in any organization, are the executive directors, office managers or other middle to upper management types. They are seen as the red tape perpetrators and as holding on to power as a miser hoards gold. To be fair some of the

bureaucratic ilk are like that but others aren't.

They are the focal point of any problems and thus take the heat while others such as myself (in the case of the Friendship Center) manage to escape relatively unscathed.

In this case I shouldn't have worried at all.

Congrats and kudos to our local boy made good, the new National Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come from all the Nation staff. I noticed Coon Come managed to snag Bill Namagoose as his intern executive director for the AFN. Namagoose, as most of you, know is the executive director of the Grand Council of the Crees. Everyone at that office is hoping he'll be back soon. Coon Come is probably hoping along different lines. He, like others in his position, knows the executive directors, office managers and management types are important components of any organization. As a leader you can have the vision of where you want to go but you need some paddlers and people to get things organized for the trip. The organizers are the ones who make the trip an easy one or a living hell as you watch things fall apart.

That's why we should always try to protect the good ones as they are few and far between. That's why there are headhunters out there scouring organizations for the best. But any headhunter comes around my executive director or office manager should know what Billy Diamond used to say, "all my hunters are armed!"

by William Nicholls

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## ON THE COVER

National Grand Chief  
Matthew Coon Come

Photographer: Neil Diamond

Cover Design: Mona La Violette



# REZ

by Ndiamond

## NOTES

Ottawa, the city that fun forgot.

We drive in, call Kenny Blacksmith and ask for directions on how to get to the Assembly of First Nations annual general assembly. We learn it's being held at Lansdowne Park, home of the Roughriders and the 67s.

We stride into the conference center and campaign posters of Matthew Coon Come adorn every available wall space. His campaign headquarters is bustling. It's like a scene from the documentary, *The War Room*. Volunteers at the computers, answering phones, huddling in corners working to get Matthew elected as National Chief. There must be about 20 people crowded into a small locker room.

We move to National Chief Phil Fontaine's headquarters and there is one person organizing campaign flyers. We ask him when the debate is to begin. He says 7 o'clock and it's already half past. Indian Time.

We enter the main hall and it is full of chiefs, delegates, volunteers, journalists and conference "ladies." Along one wall stand people wearing loud red t-shirts that read "Matthew Coon Come First Nations Camp." Banners are posted up on the wall with a simple, "Matthew Coon Come."

The speeches begin. Marilyn Buffalo speaks her allotted fifteen minutes. She's dressed in garish native garb. If she wins we'll have to look at this outfit for the next three years. Matthew goes to the podium and blasts everything AFN and sets Phil Fontaine's tone. The National Chief retaliates. He speaks his fifteen minutes, recounting his achievements from his three year term. From the chiefs and proxies' reactions it's obvious that the race is between Phil and Matthew. Lawrence Martin, Wapistan, is next to address the room. Always the entertainer, Martin picks up a guitar and sings his greatest hit Watcheeyeh. The three other candidates don't really know what to make of it at first so they play along. They bob their heads in time to Martin's rhythm. Martin speaks finally. He begins by complimenting his opponents. "If only we could work together!" he says. "But that's not the system." He takes advantage of his final three minutes to sing another song. He's touched, so to speak, a chord and the candidates rise to hug him. They pose together for the cameras. Round one is over. Matthew, one, Phil, zero.

Matthew and Phil have invited everyone for refreshments and snacks at their hotels. Will and I freshen up, dress for the occasion and hope for free beer and food.

We walk into Fontaine's party. The food's all eaten and the drinks, soft, are getting warm. We grab perfunctory drinks and wander the room. "There's no beer!" we complain to ourselves. We had heard that Phil was into parties. Lawrence Martin is there. The crowd though seems ill at ease. Like they don't really want to be there. "Let go," says Will but I refuse. Something's bound to happen. A woman calls for attention. She tells

the gathered that she'd like to sing a song for Phil. She proceeds to belt out an a capella version of "Don't You Know That You're My Hero." Phil practically ignores the serenade. We leave.

It's a short walk to Matthew's reception. It's a serious affair, more political, formal. A chief from southern Manitoba testifies to Matthew's greatness. Will tells me there are women following us. We have to leave.

We cross the street to the Glue Pot Pub. It's extremely busy. We sit and wait for service for at least fifteen minutes. The Ottawa Blackneds arrive and join us for drinks. We laugh, we talk, we drink and make merry. A well known APTN anchorperson is at another table and Sam recognizes her and points her out. We tease him and urge him to go and introduce himself. The bar slowly starts to fill up. The candidates' receptions are ending.

Candidate Marilyn Buffalo walks in and some heads turn. There are no babies to kiss so she shakes a few drunk hands instead and sits at a table not far from ours. Closing time is closing in and I walk to the bar for a final drink. It just so happens that Phil Fontaine's nephew is stand there passing out wisdom on Phil and yellow neck bands that say Phil Fontaine 2000. I ask for one and tell him I support Phil because he looks mean and tough.

Someone points out mean and tough Gino Odjick, the Algonquin Enforcer. Will rises fearlessly to ask him who he supports. Gino says he prefers Fontaine because he works a lot with the Youth.

Surprise, surprise, Phil Fontaine enters the bar and causes a minor stir. He knows the crowd. He works the room a bit and joins a table. They close the bar and me and Will actually leave early.

We are a bit groggy the next day. It's election day. There is a buzz in the room. A crowd has gathered around Matthew. The major new organizations are here. The chiefs are voting. They announce the results and Matthew is leading but just barely so they have another vote. Fontaine is putting on a brave face. I shoot him kissing a baby as his entourage cheers him on. People gather outside in the smoking area. An impromptu poll has Matthew leading by a wide margin. Chiefs from as far away as British Columbia say they are voting for him.

Results from the second round come in. The numbers still aren't enough for a sure winner but Matthew has gained a huge following. The press smell success and hover around Coon Come, waiting. A crescendo builds as Phil Fontaine walks across the room into Matthew's arms conceding the race. The place explodes.

We are broke and miss the gala. I head over the Glue Pot Pub again. Around closing time Marilyn Buffalo walks in with a tiny entourage. They sing a few sad karaoke songs. She looks defeated.

I head home defeated. Will suggests I should have given Marilyn some sympathy lovin' and we laugh.

*The Nation* is published every two weeks  
by Beesum Communications.

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### thanks to:

Air Creebec, Don Nicholls, Bjorn Olson, Don MacLeod, Voyager Memorial School, Kenneth and Dorothy Nicholls, and Clifford Benac

### Printed by Quebecor.

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Publication Mail #0584584

ISSN #1206-2642

### THE NATION IS A MEMBER OF:

The James Bay Cree Communications Society  
Circle of Aboriginal Controlled Publishers  
Canadian Magazine Publishers Association  
Quebec Community Newspaper Association  
Canadian Community Newspaper Association  
Les Hebdomadaires du Québec

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### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Individuals & Institutions: \$45

ABROAD: Individuals: \$70 U.S.

ABROAD: Institutions: \$85 U.S.

Payable to Beesum Communications

# Nation



# Bread & Circuses

by Will Nicholls

I've never been to an election for National Chief before and didn't know quite what to expect. On the outside it looked like any other conference I had ever been to; people going in and out, smokers hanging around the entrance puffing away, groups of people talking in hushed tones and you know a deal is being made.

Immediately apparent are the Matthew Coon Come posters. The press kits came with buttons and pens reading Matthew Coon Come for National Chief. Somehow Neil managed to get hold of a coveted Coon Come t-shirt. The Coon Come banners were hung by the stage with care. That boy was prepared Fontaine, who had his name on a neck tie to hang your conference ID on.

Before the open forum, the room resounded with chants of "Coon Come, Coon Come." It was deafening. The circus had begun in earnest.

Marilyn Buffalo's speech garnered applause but Coon Come's speech had people cheering even before a sentence was finished. Fontaine seemed on the defensive after that, but rallied. The best easy-listening show was Martin's. He started off with a song. He also promised that if elected he would hire the other three candidates, to laughter. Then at the end Martin said, "Well I've got three minutes left so I think I'll do another song just because I want to!" He did.

One attack on Coon Come didn't deal with the issues but religion. "A Bible-thumper," I overheard. Coon Come shrugged off the attacks until before the second ballot. Coon Come was making the rounds drumming up support. When he came to the Ontario tent a delegate verbally attacked him asking how he could support traditional ways when he was a Pentecostal. Coon Come replied, "I will not deny my faith for your votes." He went on to say there are hundreds of different First Nations in Canada, all with different traditions, ceremonies and spirituality. He said each had to find their own spirituality and he would defend everyone's right to search for their own spirituality.

Later when Fontaine conceded the election and came over to Coon Come, there was cheering and tears in many eyes. The bread and circuses had ended and the work was ready to begin.



## The people have spoken

It was an exciting time to see the election of a new National Chief. Matthew Coon Come was back after a year off from politics. A Grand Council official said he hadn't seen Coon Come so charged up since the Cree fight against Hydro-Quebec's Great Whale project. It was this charismatic and dynamic energy that secured him the position of National Chief defeating incumbent Phil Fontaine.

Because in the end this was a race between just two people. Marilyn Buffalo, the former Native Women's Association of Canada President, and Mushkegowuk Grand Chief Lawrence Martin were knocked out of the race on the first ballot. Buffalo only received 13 votes, two short of the 15 she needed to stay on the ticket. Martin was knocked out because he had the lowest amount of votes as an eligible candidate.

Buffalo quickly crossed over and joined the Coon Come camp. She said she supported Coon Come because "it's time we find a voice that's respectful of the grassroots." Indeed that was the message Coon Come was delivering. He said, "This campaign is not about Coon Come, it's about the people."

It was a message that Coon Come took across Canada with him. It worked and the results were obvious as his cross-country campaign tour netted him 80 volunteers. It was a contrast to the other candidates easily seen when you walked into the campaign offices. Coon Come's office would have seven or more working and Fontaine's only one.

Coon Come's vigour was never more evident than during his speech during the all-

candidates' open forum on July 11. You could hear the anger in his voice when he asked, "Why have our First Nations Peoples been confined to reserves and places of limited size without resources to support our economies? Why have our people been marginalized?" The cheers and clapping started and it was a message that Coon Come hammered home time and time again. His first strike against Fontaine came when he said the "path of convenience" wasn't wrong but there was another path, "a path of honour and dignity for First Nations Peoples and also for Canada." It wouldn't be the last time that Coon Come brought the present policies of the AFN to task. Coon Come asked why the AFN didn't speak up in Canada and internationally for First Nations human rights or against extinguishment clauses and the securing of Aboriginal and treaty rights. He talked about the lack of AFN assistance in Dudley George's death and the requests for an inquiry. Coon Come questioned, "When did we agree to be silent after our people are shot and killed for defending our rights?"

Coon Come promised "loyalty to our Peoples and their aspirations." He said, "I am not in the federal camp, the Liberal camp or any provincial camp. I will be always where I was born: in the First Peoples' camp."

It was the closeness that Fontaine nurtured with the Feds that proved to be his downfall. When the second ballot came back with 58 per cent for Coon Come or 10 votes short of the 60 per cent Coon Come needed, Fontaine conceded, saying, "The people have spoken."

by Will Nicholls



The following was sent through our e-mail, at the tourism office in Ouje-bougoumou and was sent by a student who experienced the shootings in Columbia, which occurred in the past year. Thought it might be nice to share it with the rest of the Cree Nation.

## Peace, conquers all...

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers;

Wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints;

We spend more, but have less;

We have bigger houses and smaller families;

More conveniences, but less time;

We have more degrees, but less sense;

More knowledge, but less judgement;

More experts, but more problems;

More medicine, but less wellness....

We have multiplied our possessions, but

reduced our values;

We talk too much, but love too seldom and hate too often;

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life;

We've added years to our life, but not life to our years....

We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor.

We've conquered outer space, but not inner space;

We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul;

We've split the atom, but not our prejudice;

We've become long on quantity, but short on quality;

We have higher incomes but lower morals...

These are times of tall men, and short character, steep profits and shallow relationships.

Theses are times of world peace, but domestic warfare...more leisure, but less fun...more kinds of foods, but less nutrition...

Theses are the days of two incomes but more divorce, of fancier homes, but broken homes.

It is a time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can either choose to make a difference or....

## Congratulations Matthew Coon-Come

on your election to  
National Chief  
and best wishes  
in your future endeavours.

On behalf  
of the  
Cree Nation  
of Mistissini



## Matthew Coon-Come

Congratulations on your  
election as National Chief

There is no doubt that your recent achievement will be spoken of for some time to come and that the admiration for your accomplishment is felt by all of us within the Cree Nation.

On behalf of Chief Reggie Mark and Council and the community of Wemindji, please accept our heartiest congratulations for your success.

Best of luck  
"if we don't govern ourselves wisely,  
we will be governed by despots."

- Patrick Henry







## BILLY DIAMOND DECLARES "WAR" ON CREE LEADERS, BACKTRACKS ON HYDRO-QUEBEC

The article dropped like a bomb in the Cree world. After a long silence, former Cree Grand Chief Billy Diamond made a stunning return to the public eye with a cover story in the August issue of the Quebec magazine *L'Actualité*.

In the nine-page article, Diamond made many surprising revelations and allegations about the inside workings and politics of the Cree world. (See excerpts on p. 21.)

Headlined, "I am a Cribécois," the magazine cover says Diamond "denounces the parasites who orchestrate the 'Quebec-bashing' of the Crees."

In the article, Diamond, 51, doesn't hold much back. Described as the "foundling father of the Cree nation," he comes out swinging in the first sentence: "This interview is a declaration of war!"

Diamond says Crees must accept development projects. He also backtracks on his fight against the James Bay mega-project in the 1970s: "I dreamed of seeing all the projects of Hydro-Quebec erased from the map. I wanted every tree to regrow. But that was an idiotic approach. You have to look to the future."

He says he is declaring war on the Grand Council of the Crees and "all the influential white agents – lawyers, anthropologists and other 'consultants' – who he accuses of manipulating the Indians."

It's not the first time *L'Actualité* has gone on the attack against Cree leaders. The magazine has been criticized for years as being anti-Native.

In the latest article, Diamond attacks Cree leaders for their "lack of vision," saying they seem to enjoy humiliating Quebec. He also says Cree leaders acted in "bad faith" by rejecting a forestry deal with Quebec last year. He describes the Cree actions as "dishonest" and "very pathetic."

Asked to name his favourite Quebec "prime minister," he replies: "Ah! There's no doubt about that, none: René Lévesque!" He calls the late premier a "friend" and boasts of helping him write a speech.

The magazine says Diamond didn't run again for chief in Waskaganish because he "was disappointed with Cree politics."

He also singles out his old friend and long-time Cree legal advisor James O'Reilly for criticism. Diamond says O'Reilly was rude to both Cree chiefs and Quebec Native Affairs Minister Guy Chevrette.

Like a good number of the other claims in the article, the accuracy of this claim is being questioned. O'Reilly disputed Diamond's version of the events and said *L'Actualité* never called to get his side.

As for why he didn't run for chief, Diamond did not mention that his time as chief left Waskaganish on the verge of bankruptcy and in danger of being put under trusteeship. Community members elected Diamond's main critic, Robert Weistche, as chief in a record landslide.

Diamond didn't return a phone call.

**NEXT ISSUE: What Billy Diamond really thought of Quebec's forestry deal.**

by Alex Roslin

## Article sparks strong reactions

The reactions ranged from sadness, to anger, to confusion. Some were left scratching their heads.

Many tried to figure out what was going through Billy Diamond's mind as he trashed the Cree leadership in *L'Actualité*.

"Hogwash, man," is how one Cree responded. "What a guy! I think he's jealous of Matthew." (The magazine hit newsstands just two days after Matthew Coon Come's election as National Chief of the AFN.)

Another long-time observer of Cree politics said, "Some people laugh at it. Others were saddened by it."

"It was so bad you kind of feel sorry for the guy. He's launched a racist war! He's picked up all his friends -- people he trusted and worked with -- and trashed them all."

Some took a more optimistic view, saying the article may provoke some positive debate.

"I welcome the criticism. Certainly there is a purpose for everything. You just have to flow along," said Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash.

But Mukash cautioned, "This is the view of one person. We always get our direction from the people. We don't go against their will."

He added, "It's unfortunate it had to be done through the French media. It should have been done through *The Nation*. It could have been made to the Grand Council, the leadership and the people."

Mukash agreed it's important for the Cree leadership to balance the views of non-Native professionals and consultants with the wishes of the Cree people: "We always have to go back to the people."

At the same time, he added, "we can't totally do away with advisors." He noted, "When we fought Great Whale, sometimes I felt we had more support from our consultants than from some of our leaders."

Many of the chiefs were on the road and couldn't be reached for a comment.

One of the people Diamond targeted,

continued on page 9





The  
Cree School Board  
Congratulates  
Matthew Coon-Come

for his election to the position of  
National Grand Chief  
of the  
Assembly of First Nations



## Cree Nation Youth Council

(of Eeyou Istchee)

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# Reactions...

continued from page 7

long-time Cree legal advisor James O'Reilly, took a philosophical approach to the affair.

"These things happen. You have great men who become disappointed at some point in their careers, and say things they will probably regret in the future," he said.

"In a way it's disappointing, but it may be healthy. I still consider Billy Diamond a friend. This is an event that will cause a lot of reflection, including by Billy."

O'Reilly disputed some of Diamond's claims and allegations. He said Crees were right to reject Quebec's proposed deal on forestry last year. "It was full of holes and the bottom line is the minister still retained the power to determine where cutting would take place and how much," he said.

He said *L'Actualité's* description of the forestry deal as generous to the Crees "was a piece of intellectual dishonesty," and disputed the magazine's claim that the deal was worth up to \$470 million.

Crees gave Diamond ample opportunity to negotiate deals on forestry and unfulfilled promises from the James Bay Agreement, but it became obvious the province wasn't serious, he said. "His strategy was allowed to proceed, but it failed. The people of Waskaganish were behind the court proceedings (on forestry) and so were all the communities.

"If Quebec had come through on their word -- if they had delivered on half the things they had told Billy -- this would be a non-issue," said O'Reilly.

As to Diamond's claim that "white agents" secretly control the Cree leadership, O'Reilly said the allegation is unfair. "I feel in a way he doesn't give enough credit to his own people," he said.

The biggest surprise for O'Reilly was Diamond's confession that he regrets his fight against Hydro-Quebec's James Bay project in the 1970s: "I think what disappointed me most, if he was quoted correctly, is that he said he was wrong about Hydro-Quebec."

In the end, however, O'Reilly was sanguine about the situation. "It sort of came out of the blue. You wonder why he did it. But I still think Billy's done some fantastic things no one will ever erase. He played a great role." -A.R.



## Cree lays claim to England

A 19-year-old Cree man plans to claim England later this month in the name of Canada's First Nations.

"Since it's the first time I'll be there, I'm going to say I discovered it," said John McDonald, who will be studying at Cambridge University during July as part of an exchange program.

McDonald plans to find an open English field to stake his claim using a customized Canadian flag with a Maple Leaf and the image of a Native person.

He said he wants Europeans to realize that Canada and the rest of North America weren't discovered by explorers such as English-backed John Cabot, Frenchman Jacques Cartier or Spanish-sponsored Christopher Columbus.

"You can't discover anything when people are already there," he told one newspaper. "I want society to realize there were people here first."

McDonald said his actions will be similar to those of European explorers since he'll be staking claim to a land where people already have an established culture, religion and justice system.

He hopes the British people won't be offended and realize the stunt is simply to make a point.

"This is a comedic approach. It's not a plan for global conquest -- it's to bring

awareness."

McDonald has a full scholarship to attend university in North Dakota in 2001. He plans to study Native North American history.

While in Cambridge this summer, he will study the ethics of war and Greek rhetoric.

## 52 airlifted off ice floe

A helicopter airlift carried hunters off a giant ice floe that went adrift near the Nunavut community of Arctic Bay, stranding 52 people.

"They were on the ice and a big pod of it broke away," a government official told a reporter.

The people were involved in the spring hunt for narwhal and seal. They were evacuated half a dozen at a time by chopper after being caught on a pan of ice about 27 kilometres long, 29 km across and up to a metre thick.

## Télébec denied

Payphone rates are staying the same in northern Quebec.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has rejected a request by the Télébec phone company to increase the local pay phone rate from 25 to 50 cents.

The decision was announced July 18. Télébec is a subsidiary of Bell Canada and already charges some of the highest rates in the country.



# election night

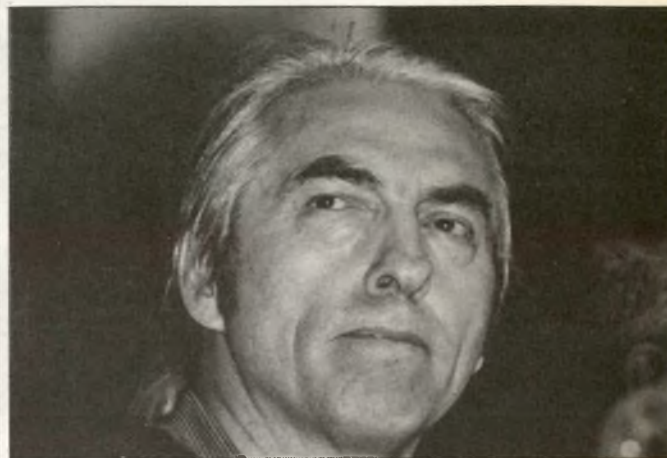
Will Nicholls & Neil Diamond



*Matthew Coon Come, moments after he's elected to the highest Native office in the land*



*Grand Chief Ted Moses*



*Then National Chief Phil Fontaine during Matthew's fiery address to the chiefs. Matthew was extremely critical of the AFN's "cosy" methods in dealing with the government.*



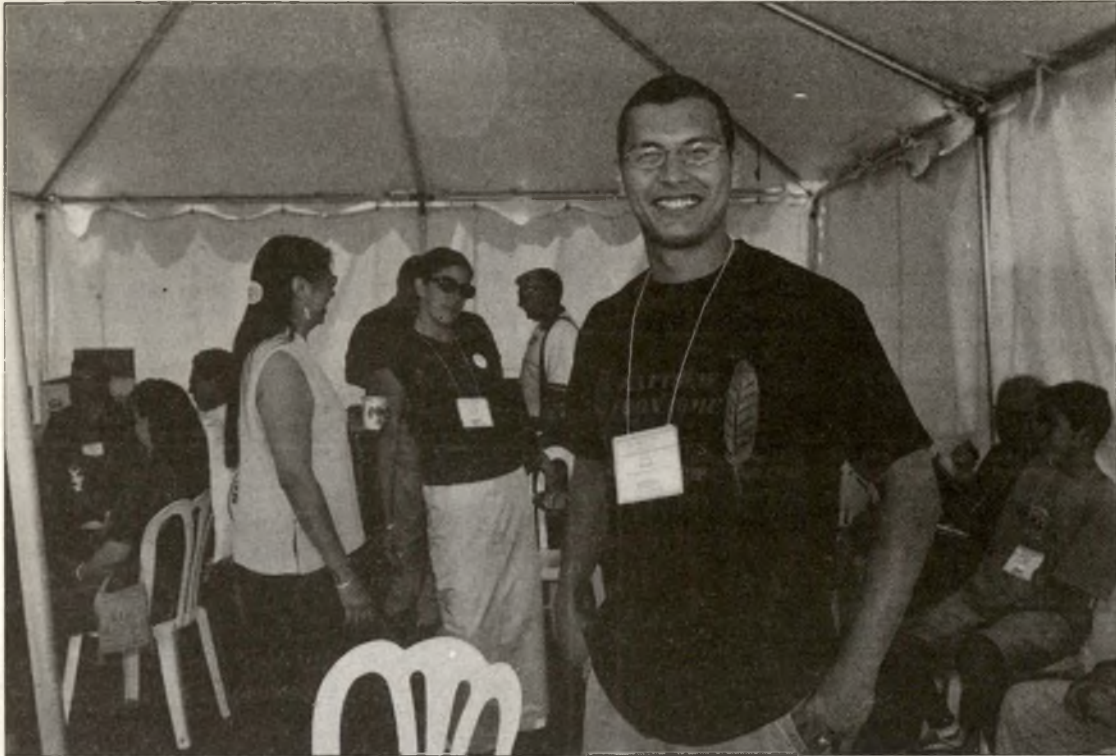
*The War Room: Matthew's Campaign Headquarters*



*The "Algonquin Enforcer", Gino Odjick, expressed support for Phil Fontaine for his record on Youth.*



# in ottawa



*Adam Beach, star of stage and screen stands guard outside Matthew's tent*



*Candidate Marilyn Buffalo of the Samson Cree Nation.*

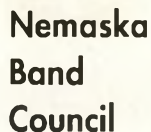


*A reserved Elijah Harper kept people guessing as to who he supported.*



*Mushkegowuk Candidate, Lawrence Martin closed and lightened up a heated debated with a song.*





Best Wishes &  
Congratulations!  
to  
Dr. Matthew Coon-Come,  
on your election as  
Grand Chief, Assembly of First Nations.



*Best Wishes and*

*Best Wishes*  
 Congratulate  
 Matthew Coon-Come  
 for being elected  
 National Grand Chief  
 and the best of luck  
 in all future endeavors.



Guy St-Julien, MP Abitibi Baie- James-Nunavik



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 ד' א' א' א' ר' ו' ד'  
 מ' א'

247 Confederation Building  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1A 0A6  
Tel.: (613) 992-3030  
Fax: (613) 996-0828  
stjulg@parl.gc.ca





**Non-Native** newspapers see him as confrontationalist and possibly a militant Native leader who will change the way the Assembly of First Nations works with the federal and provincial governments. Matthew Coon Come, says he knows when to fight and when to negotiate.

Coon Come was first elected Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees in 1987. He was elected for four consecutive terms and during that time was forthcoming on issues affecting the Crees. He talked openly about the state of the Cree Nation and his concerns.

In his own home community of Mistissini about an hour after he had won the coveted position of National Grand Chief and impromptu parade started. "It seemed like everyone who had a vehicle got into it and started driving around. Those that didn't stood outside and waved, cheered or clapped. We were so happy we had to express it some way," a local resident said.

In some First Nations spirituality they say that life undergoes stages and that at the end of one stage there is a time of rest and dreaming in readiness for the next stage. Coon Come has rested and dreamed coming back into the political arena stronger than ever. It is evident in his manner and in his talking.

**The Nation:** Matthew, you started off your political career as a councillor in the Mistissini First Nation. What was it like back then?

**Coon Come:** I remember when I was running for councillor I was about 21 at the time. I was elected in the traditional custom of my people. There were about 400 people there outside of the community hall and they all had to stand up behind their candidate. That was my first taste of traditional custom and the feeling that people think I could do it. I was very young then.

**Nation:** Those were the days when you really did stand behind your candidate.

**Coon Come:** Yes, literally. [laughter]

**Nation:** You became a chief at a young age also.

**Coon Come:** Yes, I was 24 when I became chief of Mistissini. At that time Indian Affairs was still in control. At the same time there was \$475,000 in welfare and the Mistissini budget was only \$60,000. That was a real small budget and there was high unemployment. We still lived in log houses and a majority of the people didn't have water and sewage connected to their houses. We were just in the beginning stages of trying to build up our

*"Canada is portraying itself as a champion of human rights...I don't know what country they're talking about. I don't live in that country. I see the deplorable living conditions, the highest suicides, ... and the despair ...I see no hope at all. I don't see the light at the end of the tunnel. There will have to be change before there is any light."*

community. It was a community that was inaccessible and remote. We had no road into Mistissini until 1978.

**Nation:** After being chief you went and worked with then and now Grand Chief Ted Moses. How did you find going into Cree Nation politics beyond just a community level?

**Coon Come:** Being a chief you had a lot of day-to-day issues and had to deal with administration matters. I was more intrigued



by the political aspect of it as always. I wanted to get away from being an Indian Act chief and get into the negotiations on real self-government. I wanted to see the codification of our own customs and traditions. I got involved in those negotiations as a chief. But I found you are limited in what you can do as a chief, especially when you have a tribal council. So I said I'm going to get directly involved. I was a young chief and eager to learn. I wanted to get involved in nation building and that's what we were doing... nation building. I often say what others took 100 years to do we did in 20 years and I was a part of that. We built our communities, the infrastructure, the housing program, setting the police in place, getting our own self-government legislation, our own health board, school board, setting up local businesses ranging from service oriented, motels, administrative buildings, buses, taxis and restaurants by helping out the local entrepreneur.

Then at the national level, our airline Air Creebec, our own food distribution and fuel distribution. Being at a young age and dealing with this was a heady experience. There was SODAB helping with individual enterprises. Being involved with the actual negotiators of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. We were dealing with the implementation of the JBNQA and it was exciting times to be Nation building. You're establishing your own institutions, capital and infrastructures. People could see it and walk into it.

At the same I was getting involved as an executive director of the Grand Council. Then I was directly involved in negotiations with the Federal and Provincial governments. That led me to have a great interest in running for the office of the Grand Chief. I was looking at community driven processes. You have to be able to establish and continue to involve all the people. It makes them feel that this organization is theirs through their participation. That's why I ran and was there for 12 years. The twelve years turned out to be a very short time. It flew by very fast and issues we were dealing with were very complex. It was intensive negotiations with the governments over the JBNQA.

Even being involved with constitutional changes during the Charlottetown Accord. The Crees were at the forefront and trailblazing a lot of events. At the same time there were issues that were not our issues like Quebec wanting to secede from Canada. We tipped them off. They wanted to build additional dams and flood Cree land. They wanted to proceed with those projects. I was of that generation that saw the impacts to our parents and grandparents in our communities. It was my generation that said enough is enough. I consulted the people and gathered direction. I felt after that we should do things differently. We were going to court, which was fine. We went through all the structures at the federal and provincial levels. I said let's look at it different here. Who was buying the energy? Well let's go down into the United States. Let's try to use the international instruments and the international forums. We had to make a public awareness campaign to those people that directly made the decisions that are affecting us. Why should we limit ourselves to our territory, the province or even to the Canadian borders? They are selling in the international market so we should go there too to defend our rights. These people were making decisions that were affecting our way of life. That gave us the exposure. It was done with the help of very many people. Mostly because of the determination of the Cree people the public supported us.

**Nation:** You made a cross-country tour spending 45 days on the campaign trail. How did you find that?

**Coon Come:** Well, that time went by very fast. It wasn't easy criss-crossing this country meeting chiefs, councilors and communities. I spoke to everyone, even people who weren't allowed



to vote. I even went to a basketball tournament where I was asked to speak to these young people. I went and spoke to them because I know they are the future. The other candidates were speaking at different forums but I'm talking to young people and I felt good encouraging them. To me that is very important.

I met so many people I was feeling like a magnet. People told me they want to be on my team. By the time we arrived in Ottawa we had about 80 people who were volunteers from every region. I didn't realize I was so well known. I mean I had to sign autographs and all I was trying to do was to see a chief over there. I guess my record spoke louder because of my exposure. Yes, I'm seen as a fighter for our lands and I was ready to take on anybody. That was the image people had of me. They didn't realize some of the other negotiations that were going on. In meeting the people I realized some of the things people were saying. Myself, I didn't come into this campaign with predetermined issues of how I'm going to solve the First Nations problems. My idea was this campaign is not about Matthew Coon Come. The campaign would be about the voice of the people. This campaign would be about the First Nations Peoples agenda and I was going to talk to as many people as I could. Then I could formulate and know exactly where those issues are. I would be able to come here knowing this was a First Nations People's agenda. I think that's why I won. It was a different approach.

**Nation:** There was one "spirited" moment where there was an attack on your faith. Would you talk about that and how you would assure traditional people their faith and customs?

**Coon Come:** It's unfortunate that that came about because I was a Christian when I was chief and grand chief. I never hid my faith and what I believed. I've gone through this many times and I was kind of happy it was raised. It gave me the opportunity to share my faith and to stand for what I believe. I even told them I am prepared to lose this campaign but I will not deny my faith. I had to remind them with this smear campaign that was going on was a lie. The reality is the diverseness of our nations, language, beliefs and spirituality. We should all have the right to pursue our own spiritual journey and that there is such a thing as freedom of religion. That's a fundamental human right and I respect it for other people's beliefs and traditions. I will defend that and if they want to make their own spiritual journeys they can. I guess being a Christian they thought I would throw away all that and do away with that. They don't understand that I am of the land. I am son of a hunter. If they came to my territory I would show them how we walking out ceremonies and how we conduct ourselves. I am not ashamed of it or who we



are. But they must understand the Crees never did a pipe ceremony or Sundance ceremonies. That's why I don't do it. We don't have the large drum. We have the one that is hanging. So we have different customs. We have to respect the beliefs of others and allow them to pursue their own spiritual journey.

**Nation:** Let's get back to talking to everyone. Was this in preparation for opening the position of National Grand Chief to all natives across Canada and will the Corbiere decision allow off-reserve natives to vote also? What type of time frame are you looking for?

**Coon Come:** It was very clear. This question that was asked to all the candidates was that the people would like to participate in the election of the highest office of the First Nations Peoples. It has to be addressed and my position was that I was never elected by chiefs in the past. This was the first time I had chiefs elect me. As the Cree Grand Chief I was elected by the people. By doing that people have a feeling that this is their organization and they have a say in their leader. It also gives you more clout. But I recognize the diversity. I think we have to look at the restructuring of the national organization because I come from a rights point of view. We are a nation, a people. So why not look at it as being like the United Nations and allow the people to sit there as nations and elect or national Grand Chief? I don't think you need to be a rocket scientist to figure that one out. All it needs is the will of the chiefs. It's the chiefs who have to come to grips with it and deal with it. To begin a process where they debate to see how best we can achieve that. As far as I see it's very simple. We all have returning officers and if you support the organization use that returning officer. We could do this in every community. We could do it electronically where in each province there's a returning officer and one for the national. I think we can do it. It's a matter of discussing the procedure and the process, and then we can do it. Hopefully I can do this in my term.

**Nation:** You're looking at reorganizing this AFN office. I know at one point there was a lockout when you were looking at things. Is this a result of Indian Affairs people working out this office?

**Coon Come:** Well, what we wanted to do was just secure the area here. To ensure that things would run smoothly. I guess the security team got carried away in trying to block people that were coming in. When I heard that the following morning I came to the office and clarified things and sent everybody home because there were guys standing around with guns. People kind of panicked. It was an unfortunate incident that happened. I do apologize if the impression was that I was trying to stop the former National Grand Chief from coming into the office. I do have a lot of respect for Phil Fontaine.

**Nation:** You talked about the AFN getting funds that local band councils were trying to get?

**Coon Come:** My starting point is that the national office should not be competing for funds that the First Nations Peoples are able to obtain for themselves. I do not want to see a national organization that is seen as managing, filtering or controlling where that money should go and why. The biggest outcry out there is we haven't seen those so-called millions of dollars. We should be able to see the dollars out there directed to the people rather than 15 per cent

"Well, what we wanted to do was just secure the area here. To ensure that things would run smoothly. I guess the security team got carried away in trying to block people that were coming in. When I heard that the following morning I came to the office and clarified things and sent everybody home because there were guys standing around with guns. People kind of panicked."



carved off at the top. Then another 15 per cent taken by the provincial organizations. Because it's government money you need a board of directors and they get an honorarium. Sometimes that honorarium is higher than the costs of some of the programs the people are on. So who's benefiting?

**Nation:** So will you be looking into this and making proposed changes?

**Coon Come:** Definitely, I've always been concerned with any organization that is top heavy in administration, especially a national organization. I see that as a form of off-loading. You have no control of those funds. You see, money comes and money goes and the funds are still at the discretion of the Crown. They can take it away from you or not. I was always concerned about the land and its resources. The questions of ownership and jurisdiction. I would like to make sure that we can generate new revenues that come from our lands. To have that revenue go directly to our people and directly to our communities.

**Nation:** What do you see as the state of First Nations Peoples in Canada as a whole?

**Coon Come:** When you go across this country and you go into the grassroots level why is it that a chief has to go on a hunger strike? Why is it that our people have to walk for miles to raise awareness on the epidemic of diabetes in our communities? Why is it that a



The Whapmagoostui First Nation

send their

Best Wishes &  
Congratulations!

to Matthew Coon-Come,

on his election as

Grand Chief, Assembly of First Nations.



WE ARE PROUD OF YOU

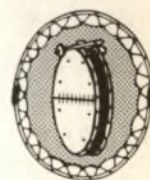


Creeco

Join us as we *celebrate*

**Dr. Matthew Coon Come's**  
*victory* as

**National Chief to the Assembly of First Nations**



C.R.A.  
A.R.C.

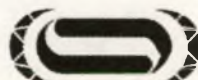
**We stand proudly behind you Matthew**



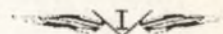
Air Creebec



Cree Construction



Servinor



Valpiro





## OUJE-BOUGOUMOU EENUCH ASSOCIATION

207, Opemiska Meskino  
Ouje-Bougoumou (Quebec)  
G0W 3C0

# Accountant

A professional accredited experienced individual is required to supervise the community's Accounting Department, which is comprised of five staff. The Accounting Department is responsible for the financial recording of the activities of the local government, and also a local development corporation. The Accountant is responsible for the preparation of financial statements, cash flow forecasts and financial statements. Working together with the Treasurer, the Accountant is involved in the preparation of annual budgets, and prepares necessary documentation for annual audit. An essential aspect of this position is the ability to provide training to Accounting Department staff.

**SALARY:** COMMENSURATE WITH THE APPLICATIONS BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

**LOCATION:** OUJE-BOUGOUMOU, QUEBEC

**APPLICATIONS:** MUST BE IN BY  
AUGUST 25, 2000

**CONTACT:** Johnny Dixon  
Human Resource  
Development/Personnel Officer  
207 Opemiska Meskino  
Ouje-Bougoumou, Quebec  
G0W 3C0

**TELEPHONE:** 418-745-3911  
**FAX:** 418-745-3426

chief would have to block roads back by the people? Why it that lobster traps are being confiscated? Why is it so important to the government right now because of the depleted stocks of fish in B.C., now they're trying to put limits on the licenses, the harvest and bag limits when they didn't care less before? So when you look across the country and see the clear-cutting and proposed dams and then you don't hear boo from the national organization because they are concentrating on programs and services you have to wonder. The reason that was given was that all was well. I feel the governments just saying, "how much do want Indian? We'll give you some money so you're happy, now leave us alone."

I come from a rights point of view. We have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right we can benefit from the extraction of natural resources and share in the wealth of the land. If we have these revenues coming then we'll have the resources to establish our own societies, our own political institutions, protect our languages and be self-sufficient. We won't have to rely on administration and receiving programs from the Federal Government. Because if that's what we are doing then we are only administering our own poverty. It's the same thing over and over again. It's a form of insanity. We need to have new approaches. I think the people have spoken and let's put the First Nations People's agenda up front. Let's deal with our issues and not be advocating a Federal Government agenda.

**Nation:** You've been tagged as a confrontationalist by the media. Do you feel that image is you?

**Coon Come:** It's unfortunate that with the treatment of First Nations Peoples and not addressing their issues, being disposed of their and having their fundamental human rights violated, their land limited or clear-cut or dammed. How do they want us to react?

Why are we considered to be confrontational or adversarial? We've waited 500 years to deal with our issues because they aren't going to go away. I will be involved in advocating our rights. I will take a different approach. I'll keep you guessing. I will not restrict myself to just using courts or the present administrative structures at the present government to in order to present your views and your case. I will use the international community. I don't have to just stand and block roads. There are other forms that you can use. They're taking our trees and selling them across the border. They're taking our oil and selling them across the border. They're even taking our fish. So why limit ourselves. The Supreme Court is not our last resort. We can go into the international forum and advocate our rights.

But I'm prepared to negotiate. I'm willing to negotiate and I think I know when to fight. I know when to sit down and sign an agreement. I would challenge the Federal Government. Look at the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, millions of dollars of taxpayers' money was used over five years and there was a recommendation that came from it. One of the central things to me dealt with the redistribution of lands and resources so we can offset the high unemployment in our communities. It called for a minister's conference that the prime minister is supposed to reconvene to begin to set in motion the strategies on how we can implement that. We as First Nations are not going to go away. If Canada is portraying itself as a champion of human rights, as the number one country to live in I don't know what country they're talking about. I don't live in that country. I see the deplorable living conditions, the highest suicides, the social problems that we have and the despair I see in the eyes of our Elders. The despair that I see in the eyes of our children. I see no hope at all. I don't see the light at the end of the tunnel. There will have to be change before there is any light.



# Congratulations to the New National Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come



Cree Grand Chief Ted Moses giving newly elected National Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come a helping hand. The handmade jacket was from the Crees and Eeyou Istchee.

**All of the Cree Nation is proud of your recent election victory as the new National Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. We look forward with great anticipation to your achievements during your three year term. We know that you will bring the experience and enthusiasm that you displayed as the Grand Chief of the Crees to your new position. You have our support and best wishes in these new endeavours.**



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GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ASHTCHEE)  
GRAND CONSEIL DES CRIS (EYYOU ASHTCHEE)



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CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY  
ADMINISTRATION REGIONALE CREE



## BEST KEPT SECRETS

BY XAVIER KATAQUAPIT

Another one of my life dreams has come true. I have just crossed the country from Ontario to British Columbia by motorcycle. I am happy to say I completed the first half of this trip on my Yamaha 650 Maxim accompanied by my friend Mike on his old Honda Goldwing.

Tonight, I am sitting in a small cottage in the town of Nakusp, British Columbia, in the west Kootenay mountain range in southeastern British Columbia. As I look up from the table and out the window the sun is setting over snow-capped mountains and the entire scene is reflected in Arrow Lake.

This place must be one of the best-kept secrets in the world. I have never heard of it and I don't know of anyone who has. We stumbled on this little town while riding through the mountains. The people are very friendly here, it is quiet and out of the way and surrounded in every direction by majestic mountains.

The earliest accounts of Nakusp include visits to the local hot springs. A natural route following Kuskanax Creek to Kimbol Lake, this trail was used by the Arrow Lake Natives who inhabited the area for over 2,000 years. Today the Nakusp hot springs is a tourist highlight. There are many other wild springs in the area.

We almost left this little town but on the way down main street we stopped to listen to a young trombone player, street musician Tyrrel Messam. We pulled over to listen to him awhile and hear his story. At age 14 this bright Jamaican boy has a great love for the trombone and with continued practice I am sure he will go places. After stopping to hear Tyrrel we decided to wander into the "What's Brewing On Broadway?" coffee and tea shop. We were greeted by the warmest person we have met so far on this trip, Debra Schiavon. The small but cozy coffee and teashop was full of interesting chats and we struck up several conversations. Debra and her husband Gerry pointed out a lot of things to do and see in Nakusp and to make a long story short we ended up spending a whole week in the community. We were also pleased to discover that Debra offers space in front of her shop for gifted young street musicians like local violinist Brandon Shelley.

I must mention that part of the reason we stayed was the fact that we both ended up with bad colds. Thanks to the great staff at the Saddle Back Medical Centre, Dr. Lea, Dr. Kelland and the hippest pharmacist on the planet, Getty Gabriel, we were soon nursed back to health.

It seems like no one comes from Nakusp and that almost everyone who lives here comes from somewhere else. The very best accommodation we found on the trip came from Donate Eckert who rented us a fantastic cottage/apartment at a most reasonable price. She and her husband Edmund also run Paradise Lodging (250-265-4379). Donate and Edmund are originally from Germany.

We also discovered to our surprise a motorcycle dealer and distributor, Wolfgang Haerter, in the mountains who specializes in exotic Laverda Italian motorcycles.

The drive through these mountains is spectacular and in many cases it is necessary to take ferries across some of the major lakes. We were happily surprised to discover that the ferries are free. There are many intriguing towns and cities around Nakusp; Nelson is only an hour and a half away and major cities such as Kelowna and Kamloops are a few hours' travel.

Time seems to stand still here in Nakusp. It is so incredibly beautiful that we are having a hard time moving on and preparing for our return trip back to Ontario. This community is definitely off the beaten track. I think that makes it one of the best kept secrets in Canada. If you ever get the notion to travel through British Columbia make Nakusp a stop along your way.



## *Congratulations!*

To Wemindji Fire Department  
for Winning the First Annual  
Cree Regional Fire Fighters  
Competition and Good  
Luck in the Provincials!

From Waswanipi  
Fire Department.





We wish the ***best of success*** &  
the ***best*** in all **future** endeavours to all  
our **GRADUATES** of 2000

**ACADEMIC**

General Education ( Secondary V )- Regional

**VOCATIONAL**

Truck Driving Class I- Regional

Accounting- Waskaganish

Heavy Equipment Operator- Regional

Data Processing- Oujebougoumou & Waswanipi

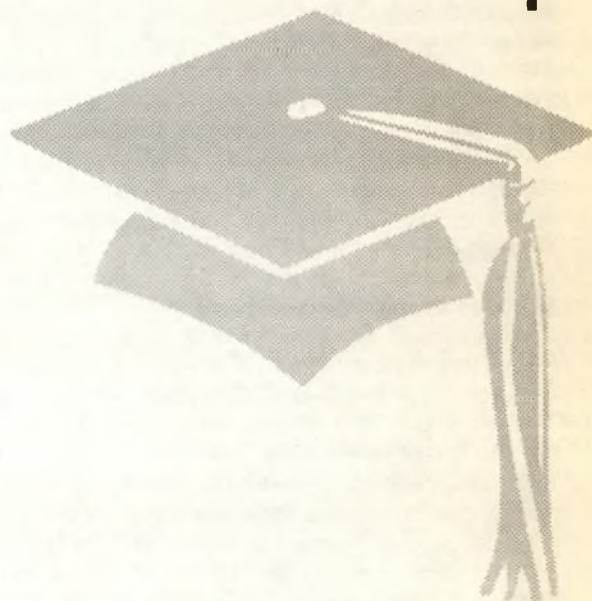
Landscaping Operations- Waswanipi

Cabinet-Making- Wemindji

Homecare Family & Social Assistance- Chisasibi

Plastering- Mistissini

Northern Building Maintenance- Mistissini



Cree School Board  
Sabtuan Continuing Education



**BEST of SUCCESS**  
**GRADUATES of 2000**



# "I am a Cribécois"

The following are excerpts from an interview between journalist Luc Chartrand and former Cree Grand Chief Billy Diamond in the August 2000 edition of the magazine L'Actualité.

*L'Actualité: You were recently excluded from the Cree leadership. What happened?*

Billy Diamond: October 1, Ted Moses, the new chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, told me that he wanted to give a new direction to our relations with Quebec. I was led to believe that I had become too close to the government, which in the view of certain Cree advisors was manipulating me. In fact, I favoured negotiations in the forestry case, while the Grand Council was preparing for litigation before the courts.

*What is the state of relations between the Crees and Quebec?*

At the lowest point in our history! They more or less do not exist; the two parties no longer talk to one another (Note from L'Actualité editors: At the time this went to press, talks were going on with a view to restarting the dialogue.)

*How did we get to this point?*

It is the result of a certain vision on the part of the Cree leaders. Or their lack of vision... Some of them believe the best way to make a name for themselves is to strike out at Quebec. As soon as the government does something, a communiqué is issued in Washington, New York or Geneva to embarrass Quebec.

*The impression is given that the Crees favour provocation and the denigration of Quebec in other countries. Why are they acting this way?*

This kind of reaction humiliating the other party is characteristic of people who have been oppressed. We are Indians and we have been dependant on government. As very young people, we learned to make use of shame, humiliation, the sense of guilt and embarrassment in order to attain our ends. Because these are feelings we understood well... Growing up, we maintained this dysfunctional attitude and we make use of these same tactics against Quebec, Canada and everyone else we find to be against us.

We also use these feelings against ourselves. We are people who live in pain and rancour... I was only 7 years old when I was forceably taken away to boarding school. But I waited until I was 44 years old in order to seek help and treatment in order to understand why I hated whites and why I had all this rage in me. We are still suffering from the construction of the hydroelectric complex at James Bay.

*Last year you were part of the Cree negotiating team dealing with the logging issue. What was your role?*

I was not a negotiator. The negotiators for the Crees were John Kitchen and Romeo Saganash. I was asked to partici-

***"The Crees negotiated in bad faith. In a fashion that was dishonest. It was pathetic. Very pathetic, in fact."***

pate as a supervisor in order to get things moving so we could secure offers from Quebec. And we in fact had one...

*Was it a good one?*

For the first time, Quebec agreed to alter the forestry regime so as to include the Crees. The trappers and the hunters would have taken part in the decisions and the companies would have been forced to work jointly with them. There was even the possibility that the Crees and the companies would create joint ventures. The Crees would also have been able to have their own CAAF (forestry supply-management agreement). This would have allowed them to become familiar with modern forestry techniques and guarantee employment. Reforesting operations were provided in those areas where there had been logging and as well there was financial compensations for the trappers and hunters who had been affected.

And it was possible to discuss this offer with Quebec. That was the most im-

portant aspect: a proposal which opened the way to more intense negotiations. When you negotiate, you never leave the table. If there is deadlock on a particular point, you put it aside and you pursue discussion on another point. Litigation is only a solution of last resort, when everything else has failed, when you have turned over the last stone and you can no longer talk to the party on the other side. Then alone you can go to court. But in this case, the door was wide open at Quebec.

*What did the trappers think of the government's offer?*

I don't know. The Grand Council did not even communicate it to them! For the moment, the lawyers are telling them they will become rich. But while we are in court, logging goes on, new roads are opened and the penetration of the territory continues. Two weeks ago, I flew over my family's trapping area and I could see all the new logging that had been done since the case went to court!...

*Why did the Crees break off negotiations?*

The Crees negotiated in bad faith. In a fashion that was dishonest. It was pathetic. Very pathetic, in fact. Each time Quebec made a written offer, they tore it to pieces. These negotiations were the result of a planned failure. They were pursued with the intention that they should fail.

*Where does the Cree radicalism come from?*

Many of the anglophone consultants who surround the Cree leaders have a personal hatred of Quebec and are continually motivated by the need to score points at the expense of the government. And there are, among them, a number of anthropologists, who have become more Indian than the Indians. The Crees should not be serving as pawns in a confrontation between the anglophones and Quebec or between anglophones and francophones. We are living in a prov-

Continued on page 23



**Let's all go to the:  
26th Annual General Assembly  
of the Grand Council of the  
Crees of Eeyou Istchee  
& The Cree Regional Authority**



**To be held in Mistissini on  
August 22,23,24th, 2000.**

**This year's theme:  
The Unity of the Cree Nation**



GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (REYOU ASTCHIE)  
GRAND CONSEIL DES CRI (REYOU ASTCHIE)



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 CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY  
 ADMINISTRATION REGIONALE CREE



EXCEPTS FROM BILLY DIAMOND INTERVIEW

Continued from page 21

**Well Done  
Matthew Coon-Come**

on your election to  
**National Chief**  
and best wishes  
in your future endeavours.



On behalf of the Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation

## FIRST NATIONS BANK

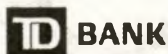
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ince where there is a desire for self-determination. Canada also has a policy of self-determination. We don't have to ally ourselves with Ottawa against Quebec. We should concern ourselves with our own goals for self-determination, and that means beginning by getting programs and services underway for our own people...

*Why do the Crees permit their advisors such a degree of authority?*

If anyone dares to question this authority, he is automatically ostracised, cut out and finds himself without work. Anyone who raises this question is considered to be an enemy. Every possible accusation will circulate about him. I dare to speak and I have become the enemy...

*Bill Diamond, the chief who signed the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, denounces "white agents" who manipulate Indians to maintain the war between Quebec and Ottawa...*

*Tell me about the Cree young people...*

My greatest concern is a demographic one: in 1975, there were only 5,000 Crees in Quebec. Today, there are 12,000 and in 2025, we will have a population of 20,000. Now, there can never be 20,000 hunters-trappers. The land would never support it. Therefore, our future rests in the creation of jobs and the only way to do that is to establish a partnership with Quebec.

The times have changed... When I managed to stop the construction work on LG-2 in 1973, I dreamed of seeing all the Hydro-Quebec projects erased from the map. I wanted each tree to grow again. But that was an idiotic approach. You have to look to the future. Our young people have to feed their families and they cannot do this by trapping. They can learn to use machinery, but in order to make use of machinery, it is necessary that there be development projects. It is all well and good to dream, to fantasize and to invent a Cree utopia, but the reality is we have to co-exist with Quebecers. Whether we like it or not, Matagami is going to stay where it is, Chibougamau is going to stay where it is, Radisson as well; the forestry industry, the mining industry, Hydro-Quebec -- all of that is going to stay.



# Dr. Matthew Coon-Come

*Congratulations*

*on your election to*

*National Chief*

*and also our best wishes*

*in your future endeavours.*

On behalf of Mishtuk Corporation

John Kitchen, President  
Peter J. Gull, Vice-President  
and Director General



*The Cree Health Board  
congratulates*

*Matthew Coon-Come*

*on his election to*

*National Chief*

Cree Board  
of Health and  
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# CLASSIFIEDS

## 100 - BIRTHS

I would like to congratulate my sister Sabrina Jolly on the safe arrival of her new born baby boy in Val'dor Kohl mason Ernest on May 18. Right on dad's birthday. It must be the greatest gift for dad on his birthday, (a grandson). Anyways, take care of your new bundle of joy. I'll always be here for you sis, I love you. From: your sister in Wask.

Children are truly precious gifts from God to us. Congratulations and life long happiness to Beth and Gerald Longchap on the safe arrival of their beautiful con David on June 8th. Love and Prayers form Church and Sandra Morron. Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Psalm 127:3

## 101- BIRTHDAYS

A belated birthday wish goes to someone I truly love in Waskaganish. I know this is too late but it's never too late to say "I love you." I just want you and everyone else to know how happy I am when I'm with you. I don't know what I'd do without you. You mean the world to me. I'll always love you no matter what happens. I know we both know that there's people out there are saying bad things about us. But the thing that only matters is that we both love each other. Let's just ignore those people. And there's no on "NO ONE" will ruin our relationship. I always want to be with you. I don't wanna lose you because (you know why). And I want you to know that I like everything about you, the way you hold me at nights, the way you touch me, the way you smile at me, especially the way you kiss me. Memories of you will always remain in my heart, forever. Love always and forever your banana peeling, all the way from (you know where). LOVE YA! OXOX

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY SANDOO!!** Shouting out my loudest birthday wishes to my sweet nephew Alexander. Hope your birthday was full of fun and surprises too. Wish I were there to celebrate the day with you. Sending all my love, hugs and sweet Caillou kisses to you, Love your aunt LSB. Happy birthday to you too Jules - Sandoo - Okay?

Happy 13th Birthday to our Sister Sam!! Finally, you are a teenager. My, My you will become more bossy than ever! Enjoy your day Sis. And be good to us. Love: Sol, Bibou and Babysh

I'd like to wish a happy 23rd birthday to someone very special in my life his name is Clint St-Gelais. I love you so deep in my heart, knowing the feeling that you are here by my side, keeping me confident when I need it you're my shoulder to cry on when I feel lonely, you're all my desire needs and you are

all I need.

We would like to wish a happy birthday to the most important people in our lives our Mom and Dad. Our Mom's birthday was on Feb.9 and our Dad will be celebrating his birthday on August 10. And our Mom and Dad will be celebrating their anniversary on May 20th. We just want to let you guys know how much we love you and Thank you for being there for us when we needed you the most. Happy birthday to you both and happy Anniversary and many more to come. Fr. your kids Cecilia, Sheila, John, Mary, Thomas.

Happy 3rd Birthday to our Beautiful Girl Leigha Hookimaw, May 14, 2000. Kiss, Nose and Hugs From Mom and Dad, Luke Star. We love you.

I would like to say Happy Birthday to Conrad Happyjack on July 16th. So, how's summer school? Is it hard? I hope that you pass. Don't party too much. From a girl in Waswanipi.

We want to wish our grandma Caroline Bossum a happy birthday on June 18. We hope your birthday was a special one especially when you got to celebrate it with me, your grandson Mathias. We love you so much and don't worry about being alone, I will take care of you like I took care of late grandpa Jimmy. From your grandchildren Mathias and Valentina. Yeah Mom! Happy belated birthday from Carl and Annette. Fr: Oujé-Bougoumou.

On June 29, nine years ago, God blessed us with a handsome baby boy and named him Mathias Carl-Lee Bossum. So we are wishing our son a very happy belated birthday. Son, you've been through so much this past year especially when grandpa Jimmy past away but we want you to know that we are always here for you and that we love you so very much, don't ever forget that! Love always, your mom (Annette), dad (Carl) and your little sister Valentina Bosum from Oujé Bougoumou.

Again on June 29, 40 something years ago, God put Mary (Mianscum) Shecapio Blacksmith on this earth to be our mom, who had six kids and was blessed with six grandchildren all together. So, we the six kids and also the six grandchildren want to wish her a very, very happy belated birthday. hey mom, grandma, how old are you really?? From you six BIG children; Theresa, Annette, Darlene, John-John, Jeremiah and Joy and your grandchildren: Mathias, Valentina, Gina, Aaron, Jossée and Brendon. We love you mom and grandma. Fr: Oujé-Bougoumou!

Birthday Greetings to Alexandra Gilpin who will be celebrating her Birthday on June 23. Keep up the hard work in

school. We love you sweetie pie. P.S. Don't party on you birthday. From Wilfred, Verna and Children

Happy Birthday to my Grandpa Elijah Bobbish who will be celebrating his 75th birthday on June 23. We love you and miss you a lot. Thank you Grandpa for everything you have taught and given us it's hard to imagine what we would do without you. From your grandchildren in Eastmain. Diana, Gary, Dorianne, Alexander and Martina.

Happy Belated Birthday to my Dad Elijah Bobbish on June 23. He will be celebrating his 75th birthday. We love you so much, you are special to us form you daughter Verna who lives in Eastmain. P.S. Don't forget to save me a big piece of Birthday cake.

Happy Belated Mother's Day and Happy Birthday on June 15th to my loving, caring, adorable, gentle, wonderful, special, best cook and every wonderful name you can think of about "My Mom", Janie Daisy Kanatewat. I wanted to take this time to tell you what a wonderful and caring mom I have, honorable mention the best cook in the world. You have cared, nurtured and loved me ever since I was born and you're still doing the same sweet things today for me and my children. there are no words that can describe how loving and caring you are towards your children and grandchildren. At least I know you took it easy on Mother's Day, because you were sitting all the way to Val d'Or, except for the breakfast you made that morning at KM550, you could have said "no" to them. But, I know you can never say "NO" to anyone. Anyway, it's wonderful to have a mother like you and to say how special you are to me. I also wanted to say how thankful I am for you to be there when I needed someone to talk to when I was in my most difficult time of my life. I guess you know what I'm talking about. I still have a hard time trying to tell you everything, I guess the right moment will come in time. Remember, when I told you and one of my sisters that we

should go down south just the girls, just to have a mother and daughter talk, just to have fun. We should seriously think about this and that way we can ask you a lot of questions about.... Have wonderful birthday and still many more birthdays to come. I didn't want to say how old you are, I know you always consider yourself to be sweet sixteen and also to say that you're still young at heart. I wanted to say I love you very much and it's such a blessing to have you as my mother. With all my love, hugs & kisses too. From your oldest daughter Charlotte

Wishing a very happy belated Mother's be celebrating her big 60th birthday on June 15th. We're very proud to say that she had a new and special grandchild on June 9th, a little boy named Isaih Allen Thomas Niibinwaashkum, added to her family. Grandma, your loving and caring ways are indescribable. We would like to wish you a very happy birthday and many more years to come. We love you very much with all our little hearts and souls. Also many hugs & big kisses to you. Much Love from your grandchildren, Steve, Candace & Darius.

Jordana June Moses will be celebrating her 5th birthday on June 7. I can write a whole book about how much you mean to me. The words may come from the tip of my pen, but the feelings come from the bottom of my heart. P.S. I will probably never finish writing the book, because my love for you is never-ending. From MOM (Victoria Wischee Wask)

June 7th 1995 was the best day that I ever had, because this was the day that I was blessed with a little baby sister. Happy 5th birthday Jordanna!! Love always your big brother, Jordan Moses (Wask)

I'd like to wish my niece Rachel Salt happy Birthday on June 4. And to my cousin Linda Salt on June 5. Wish you both lots of happiness, laughter and may your wishes all come true. I love you both and miss you very much. Take care. From Jeannie, Marcie Mamianskum (Whapmagoostui)

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# CLASSIFIEDS

I'd like to wish a Happy 18th B-Day to Rita Capissit on June 18, 2000. Have a great party don't party too much. Take care. In friendship, Allisson, Kirk, Minnie, Clint Lextase was boring. Joke.

Happy Birthday to Linda Capissit. So your finally 18. I still remember when we went to Super Club we were always sent out cause we were under age. Anyway now your cards exist. Happy B-Day. Don't party too much. In friendship, Minnie Cap.

I would like to wish a belated birthday to a very special person in my life. My wonderful father who celebrated his birthday on May 18. I was happy for you that you didn't even drink on your birthday. And I want to say Thank you for all the wonderful things that you have done for me. And thank you for not giving up on me even when I was bad. I'll always love you dad. I wouldn't ask for a better father cause you're the best. I was happt that I spent your birthday with you. You should take a day off and relax and enjoy your birthday. Hope it was a good one. Anyways, happy belated birthday and thanks again, I love you dad with all my heart. Love always: your third daughter. P.S. Happy belated father's day on June 18.

Happy 19th Birthday to my beautiful daughter Jennifer Koosees in Kashechewan, Ontario. Congratulations on your graduation too on June 9th. Happy Birthday on June 3:00 Love, Alex & Rita (Dad & Mom) xoxox

Happy Birthday to my #1 Mom and Grandma. Her name is Margaret Pepabano She'll be celebrating her 57th birthday on July 17, 2000. I thank God for how you have always been there to encourage support and to show how you care! My love for you will grow stronger every day. Love always your daughter Deborah and your grandson Desmond XOXOXO

To my husband Bentley, I would like to take this time in moment to wish you a beautiful birthday on June 24, 2000. This will be the 18th Birthday I will spend with you and I hope to see many more (white hair) with you, because my dear you're the best thing that ever happened to me. From: your wife Susan and our Three beautiful children.

Happy Belated 2nd Birthday to Roberta Bearskin on May 25, 2000. And many more to come. With love and kisses Lillian.

Happy Birthday on June 10, 2000 to my mom, Rita Koosees (54 yrs old) I love you Mom so much. Also Happy Birthday to my son Tyler on June 17, and to Linda Williams on June 9, 2000.

and Jason Koo on June 27, 2000. Love Jennifer Koosees (Kash)

Happy belated birthday wishes going out to Sam Bearskin (66th) and Tyler Pashagumeskum (1st) on June 19th and to Andrea Bearskin-House (4th) on June 27th. Nellie

## 103 - ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Anniversary to my husband Michael Quiscappio. I just want you to know how much I love you. And I will always love you no matter what happens. hope you will have a great day on our anniversary Fr: your wife.

Happy Anniversary to Mark & Sandra Macdonald Celebrating Eight years of marriage on July 10. Coming from your family back home: Mom, Cecil & Rita, James & Alice, Bert Jr & Rose, Marjorie & John, Daisy, Gloria & Chris, Peggy & Billy Jr. Pauline & Mike, Carol, Kenny & Pauline, Johnny, David, Shannon, Michael . P.S. Hope to see you soon.

Happy 1st Anniversary to my friend and Cousin, Maxine and Joey Blacksmith, on July 17, 2000. Wishing you all the happiness and love throughout the years. Love in Friendship: Melanie Gull (Serena, Selena & Sinclair) (Waswanipi) To my husband Donald Matoush. I thank the lord for blessing me with a wonderful husband to love and share my life with. Thank you for the many wonderful things you do, you are truly

a blessing to me. Happy 12th Anniversary my love on July 22. With love form your wife; Natalie

## 104- GRADUATIONS

Congratulations to my brother Bob Sam Happyjack, on his High School Graduation at W.J.H.M.S., in August 2000. You did it bro!! You're one step closer to your dream. Don't give up. And remember don't party too much. Take care when you leave for College. I love you and I'll miss you. Love always your sis: Melanie Gull

To our two tall uncles, Bobby Happyjack and Arnold Neeposh on their Graduation at the W.J.H.M.S.. You did it guys! Don't give up. We'll miss you when you leave for College. Love Always: your two nieces Serena and Selena Gull (Was)

To all graduates year 2000 at Voyageur Memorial School: CONGRATULATIONS on your graduation from high school! I am proud of you and know that you are proud of yourselves. Graduation is a good time to look back and assess your accomplishments. It is also a good time to look ahead, to decide how you can best use your skills to create the kind of future you want for yourself. I wish you all the best. From George Longchap, Student Supervisor, Voyageur Memorial School.

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